Australian Bureau of Statistics

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One in two people starting a job were previously out of work

Over half (52%) of the 1.6 million people who started their current job in the twelve months to July 2002 were out of work prior to beginning that job, according to figures released today by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS). A further 40% changed employer to start their current job, while the remainder (8%) were employed in their own business.

Of those who were out of work prior to starting their current job, 58% wrote, phoned or applied in person to an employer for work. Half (50%) of employed people who changed employer took this step to attain their current job.

The majority (63%) of employed people who started their current job in the previous twelve months were working full-time in that job. Of those who usually worked part-time hours, over one-third (39%) would prefer to work more hours.

There were 554,800 unemployed people aged 15 and over in July 2002. Three in four (76%) unemployed people were looking for full-time work. The majority of men (86%) were looking for full-time work, as were the majority of women (62%).

The most commonly reported main difficulties in finding work for unemployed people were:

- too many applicants for available jobs (15%);
- considered too young or too old by employers (13%);
- insufficient work experience (11%); and
- lacked necessary skills or education (11%).

Over one-quarter (26%) of unemployed people had been unemployed for one year or more (ie, were 'long-term unemployed'). The majority (84%) of long-term unemployed people were seeking full-time work.

One in five (20%) long-term unemployed people reported being 'considered too young or too old by employers' as their main difficulty in finding work. Other difficulties experienced were 'lacked necessary skills or education' (16%) and 'own ill health or disability' (12%).

Further information is in **Job Search Experience, Australia, July 2002** (cat. no. 6222.0).

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